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## Notes On NIRA—For Consumers

As THIS bulletin goes to press it is too early to judge the outcome of the National Industrial Recovery Act. The most that anyone can do is to indicate trends, and to highlight a few points of potential and of actual danger to consumers' interests which should be especially watched. In General Johnson's own words, the Recovery Act is designed to put men back to work and so to restore purchasing power. As a reward for hiring men at shorter hours and allegedly higher pay the manufacturers are promised increased prices and profits, and their utterances in their own trade groups show plainly that the raising of prices and restoration or increase of profits is the feature of the recovery plan upon which they pin their hopes for economic revival. (By economic revival they always mean revival of *their* trade, and *their* profits.) Few of them are aware of the dependence of our economic system upon the supply to the consumer of sound and durable goods at a low price, and upon payment to workers of such sums in wages and salaries as

will permit them to purchase the products of industry.

A Consumers' Counsel for the agricultural recovery administration and a Consumers' Advisory Board for the industrial recovery administration have been appointed, but their duties are nebulous and their powers, if any, undefined.

A letter of inquiry in July about the plans of the Consumers' Advisory Board for protecting the consumer against exorbitant price rises was answered a month later by the Chairman, Mrs. Rumsey, that "at the present time we are discussing and formulating a policy . . ." etc. So far as we know the policy is still as much in abeyance as ever, for we hear of no effective plans to provide the necessary safeguards. We are indeed reliably informed that no definite and informed pro-consumer attitude in the Consumers' Advisory Board is wanted or would be tolerated if it should appear. The one able person of scientific qualifications on the Committee was obliged to resign, and the consumer was then left

to the mercy of a group of well-meaning people without technical training or specialized knowledge to deal with the appallingly difficult technical and economic problems facing them.

A release from the Department of Agriculture states that Consumers' Counsel Fred C. Howe will direct a nationwide weekly check on prices of food and textiles and increases in return to the farmers. (So far the increases have been decreases, and the evidence indicates that increased business profits will tax the farmer as consumer far more than his income is increased as producer.) The information is expected to be released to the press by radio and by special bulletin; it will be prepared in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data released may, if business men do not object too much, show current retail prices on a number of everyday food necessities, the amount of money which goes to the farmer for the raw materials which go into these foods, the increase in labor costs as a result of rises in wages and number of workers employed, and an index of the prices of other commodities which the farmer buys. All consumers should ask to be put on the mailing list to receive this information. If it is intelligently and honestly compiled it may provide the basis for protest but it cannot in itself provide even a weak or temporary check on unjustified price rises. The Administration fears to employ any weapon or even to encourage consumers to employ any weapon that would enable them to strike *effectively* at profiteers. Profiteering is so much a part of our system that any successful attack upon it will be protested by American business men as an attack upon the very foundations of our economic order.

The withholding of patronage, however, always constitutes the consumer's most effective protest against exorbitant price rises. The Administration's publicity bureau at first set about to urge something akin to boycott against business organizations which would not conform to the blanket code; perhaps the disrepute of the boycott in the eyes of conservative figures of the bench and bar may be somewhat mitigated by the government's attitude, which has off and on been slightly encouraging to the idea of consumers' boycott. There is no doubt that the presumption common in the courts, of the illegality of boycott is due to its recognizably telling effect—indeed, if consumers ever come to realize what power they hold in the simple giving or withholding of their patronage, they may come to achieve the overwhelming economic power which is rightfully theirs—power as great, for example, as that now possessed by the Radio Corporation of America or the National Electric Light Association (lately purified on paper and reborn under another name). Indeed the very suggestion of the boycott has brought such a storm of protest from business groups that General Johnson in a radio speech on August 27 beat a hasty retreat, and said, "There has been a great deal of loose talk about boycott, intimidation and violence. I want to say to you in all

earnestness and solemnity that if there is even a shadow of such a thing it would spoil this whole endeavor."

The one means by which the consumer can successfully manifest his approval or disapproval in economic matters and determine by an inescapable logic the decision of his economic overlords is apparently so potent a weapon that his government fears even to allow him to use it. Anyone intending to use mass or concerted action against manufacturers or dealers who raise prices excessively, or exploit their workers by subterfuges designed to circumvent the provisions of the recovery codes, will do well to include a lawyer in the group to advise them.

Since in the case of monopolies, protest against exceptionally high prices cannot be effectively made by withdrawal of patronage, *insist* that the anti-trust laws be enforced. It is well understood and hailed with approval by business that violations of the anti-trust laws will be overlooked if an industry is operating under an accepted code and if its wage and employment conditions are thus satisfactory to the government. It is of course inconceivable that industry should raise wages without getting in return its ownership-pay in the form of the highest profits possible to capital. The right to fix minimum prices with penalties provided to penalize price-cutters would constitute in the eyes of most captains of industry a fair trade. The consumer as usual will pay and in the case of concerted legalized price fixing, he will pay plenty, as he does now to low-wage, high-price industries like cosmetics, canned goods, steam laundries, gasoline service stations, women's dress accessories, novelties, etc. In view of the complete breakdown of control by public service or public utility commissions whose duty it was originally to protect the consumers' interest in charges for and quality of electric light, gas, telephone, and bus and trolley service, it is naive to expect the governmental Consumers' Advisory Board or the corresponding agency in the agricultural recovery administration, with no clearly defined jurisdiction or assignment of powers, to prevent even the most outrageous victimization of the average purchaser. Competition is an inefficient and wasteful and shifting safeguard, but until effective governmental price and profit controls and similar safeguards of the consumer's interests are put into operation, it is one of his few protections, and one he must have. Even to set up such price and profit safeguards as have been suggested would take a year or more, and would employ practically every qualified economist in America (just as technically competent and adequate food and drug administration would use more men than there are of proper technical qualifications now available in the country).

Dr. Ogburn in resigning his position in the Consumers' Merely-Advisory Committee explained indeed that in the absence of some price level restriction through the operations of business competition,

the only remaining practical price restraint would appear to be in the periodic recurrence of economic depressions. Other economists in the Administration, and there are a number, or even Chief Administrator Roosevelt himself should be able to understand, as indeed any intelligent person not having a business interest in the issue can easily see, that when one far-reaching control, however shifting or unreliable, is removed, another, more positive and less providential in quality must be applied. The best of economists admit in private conference, and occasionally in public addresses, that they do not know just how our capitalistic business system works in those more cheerful intervals when it seems to work for a time and after a fashion. Any economist will admit that he doesn't know how the system can possibly work if the drive or brake (according to one's way of looking at it) of price competition is removed.

Senator Borah is one of a very few who have indicated that he is not in favor of relaxing the enforcement of the anti-trust laws, and evidence of flagrant violations of the relaxed or voided laws might be of interest to him. If the Administration is determined to be lenient or wink both its eyes, protests to Congressmen and Senators or to the President himself may be the most effective means in bringing pressure to bear. Do not waste your paper and stamps on correspondence with Mrs. Rumsey's Consumers' Advisory Committee. The Committee has other functions than these, or perhaps has none at all except that of window dressing.

In addition to the official releases from the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, consumers who are interested in following developments of the Recovery Act closely should especially read trade journals like *The Business Week*, *Drug Trade News*, *Food Field Reporter*, *Drug and Cosmetic Industry*, *Editor and Publisher*, *The Glass Packer*, *National Carbonator and Bottler*, *Chemical Markets*, and *Confectioners Journal*. The newspapers for the most part are handling the subject in very gingerly fashion, because a number of them are antagonistic to the blanket code and know what the codes may do to their own labor costs and those of their advertisers (who, since they hold the purse, are the men controlling newspaper policies). Further, newspaper publishers are torn between pleasing the general public who seem to be accepting NRA with a certain vague and uninformed enthusiasm, and catering to their manufacturer-dealer-advertiser financial supporters, many of whom are lukewarm if not definitely hostile to the plan.

Trade journals, however, must supply news and critical comment to the business men, because the large and very practical interests at stake demand complete and accurate accounts of what is happening. They cannot afford to act on news that suppresses the basic facts and/or only partially presents vital issues. The newspapers' and popular magazines' reports on the National Recovery Administration and especially the consumers' rights under the program have been spotty and full of omissions of the most significant character, as, for example, the papers' failure to report that their own code

was repeatedly turned down because of its egregious attempts to provide for the newspaper business an elaborate set of exemptions—under the entirely false assumption that newspapers in general were a social service rather than business and financial institutions. Significant developments and plans of the Administration often do not appear in the papers or if they do, their announcement is delayed sufficiently, so that a proper interpretation and "point of view" can be written into them. If they cannot be suppressed, they are often buried in some obscure place far back towards page 37, where the ordinary reader may miss them. In this manner, *The New York Times* was able to evade giving any more than the sketchiest sort of account of the National Recovery Administration's idea offered some months ago, that the government encourage the populace to boycott firms which did not sign the appropriate code to insure reemployment. Yet from the standpoint of the average reader of *The New York Times* (not the business man who supplies its income through the purchase of advertising space) this was one of the most significant items yet discussed anywhere in connection with the recovery plan; the only item indeed which portended any sort of protection of the consumer's interest. The very fear of its potentialities was sufficient reason for most of the newspapers to handle it either with careful editorializing in what pass for straight news columns, or with careful editorial warnings.

The consumer will need to keep himself closely informed on the progress of events under the National Recovery Administration and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in order that he may exercise his right of protest, or disapproval of price trends by the withholding of patronage, and protest to his representatives in Congress. Consumers who can do so, will be wise to develop or revive their household skills, and in the case of the farmer to return as far as possible to home production of the greatest possible proportion of his necessities—more horses, and oats; and fewer cars and trucks, less gasoline and oil. It is perhaps the most devastating commentary that can be made upon present capitalist organization that everywhere in rural communities and in small towns it is being found necessary to return to cottage industry. School teachers and home demonstration agents are again teaching the household arts in the particular form which will enable the consumer to avoid every possible cash expenditure for canned goods, clothing, shoes, furniture, and farm implements. During the last boom period, advertisers duly supported by the manufacturing and retail communities, carefully cultivated the idea that one's time was too valuable to waste in messing around concocting fly spray, paint remover, liquid shampoo, tooth powder, or lubricating oil for the household, and numerous other small items in which there is a large profit or large waste in distribution. With the advance of the depression, a large number of CR's subscribers, and perhaps some millions of others, have discovered the economic fallacy of this reasoning—in a profit economy—and many have written that they have saved the price of a year's subscription to CR's confidential service, on tooth-

paste alone by making tooth powder out of finely bolted precipitated chalk (which should cost not over 30c a pound) with a small amount of baking soda if desired, and oil of wintergreen or peppermint to flavor.\*

These are small matters perhaps, but the total of the small wasteful expenditures made by the consumer amounts to a sizable proportion of his total real income (real income is income measured by *purchasing power*). Moreover, his bargaining power will be greatly increased if in every respect possible he becomes independent of the efficiency or the continuousness of the working of the industrial and financial processes set up by business men for their benefit and profit. How persuasive would be the clamor for reduced utility rates, for example, if any large number of consumers in any community were again to resort to the old fashioned kerosene lamp and to the farm housewives' reliable and economical if somewhat inconvenient kerosene stove, until such time as gas and electricity rates were more reasonable and the companies' treatment of their customers with respect to deposits to guarantee payment, and extortionate charges for extension of lines, for example, is less bureaucratic and arbitrary. Consumers dislike being bothered with such matters, but in our opinion they will either be bothered with them in the coming months or they will see their individual personal and family economic position strongly depressed by rise in price of many, if not most of the necessities. Consumers and the under-privileged parts of the population generally have two means of expressing their protest against the way in which the burdens of the depression are piled upon their shoulders while the wealthy unemployed are left comparatively free. The first is to bring about by protest and by ballot a change of the system of production and distribution which will adapt it in a fundamental sense to the needs and interests of consumers and workers rather than to those of bankers, brokers, speculators and finance capitalists like Morgan and Dawes. Such a change requires a length of time and a mode of preparation which few are ready for in this land of democratic ideals and plutocratic control, of an all-pervading atmosphere of salesmanship and rotarianism and boom psychology, a land where millions still believe that if given a good "break," they have a chance to become Morgans and Rockefellers. If a crisis impends in this country (as is plainly to be feared, from the recent experience of most of the industrial countries of the world), there will be no time for effective organization and action to reverse the effects of two or three decades—of what was almost universally believed to be the coming of prosperity, comfort and leisure for everyone in America.

The immediate possibility for the individual consumer and worker, given their background of experience and aspiration and their tradition of individualistic thinking and action (which have characterized even the trade unions except those on the extreme left wing) seems to be to strike as best they can against profiteering. Nothing will stop a

rise in baker's bread so quickly as would a return on a large scale to the practice of baking bread in the home. To be sure, this is an art which has almost disappeared with the introduction even in farm communities of baker's bread and now even of ready-mixed biscuits and cakes requiring only to be put into the oven and served. But the housewives who still remember how to bake can teach their neighbors and it will be to their advantage and their neighbors' as well for them to do so. It is a well known fact that the quality of commercial jelly and jam is much higher relatively than that of other factory-produced foods because the housewife still retains a working practical knowledge of the home standard of ingredients and quality to which the store product must measure up.

The development, in so far as is possible and practicable, of his own resources of home production and manufacture, and his withdrawal, as far as possible from urban life to rural and small town living will be the consumer's best defenses against developments of the New Deal philosophy which are contrary to his best interests. His other best method is that of withdrawal of patronage from manufacturers particularly, and from dealers, where prices are too high and labor receives either too low a wage or where all economies are achieved at the cost of the worker, or where on account of great profits or prodigious waste in distribution, the effective labor content of the product is small, or the payment to the original producer or farmer ridiculously low in proportion to the toll taken by mill or factory, transportation and delivery systems, administrative overhead, salesmanship and advertising. (As in the case of an industry such as that producing cosmetics, packaged foods, soft drinks and other beverages, milk and cream, gasoline and oil.)

The most effective thing perhaps that the individual can do to insure that the money he spends will as quickly as possible and to the maximum extent possible go into the channels of consumption and so tend to bring about revival of trade and re-employment of workers, is for him to employ whenever a job of any kind is to be done, a worker, and not an employer or capitalist, to do it. If you have painting or carpenter work to be done, employ a painter or carpenter, rather than a contractor; in buying food deal so far as possible and as often as possible with the farmer himself, and so put your money into the hands of those who need and will spend it for consumption goods, rather than into the hands of a dozen or a score of middlemen, brokers, bankers, advertising agents, newspaper publishers, and dividend receivers who live not by producing essential services, but in the main by interfering with or taking a toll from the flow of goods and services. It is characteristic of their functioning and motivation that they permit the smallest possible amount of their takings to trickle back to the workers in mill and shop and farm.

One of the most important indications of the impending doom of our capitalist economy is the growth of systems of barter and of the teaching of long abandoned and half forgotten household arts of food and clothing manufacture, shoe repairing, and so on to farmers and workers. This

\* *Handbook of Buying*, October 1931—35c to subscribers to the confidential service.



reversal of the tendency of recent years represents a general recognition of the waste of the usual processes of buying and selling, banking and exchange, by which much money has passed from hand to hand, but little has been received by those who do the work of the world.

If the business man insists upon holding the price of passage over his economic toll bridge too high, his erstwhile customers will find some other way to cross the stream, and he will find indeed that people can live without "national distribution," ethyl gasoline, and Moody's Manual of Investments. If the toll levied for such luxuries and conveniences is too high, people generally will find a way as they are rapidly finding a way now, to restore their own possibilities of living more independently of middlemen of all kinds, and so will pay a smaller premium for communication and exchange on a national basis.

If we were a capitalist of wide influence and commanding power, we should set ourselves to the task of making the service of banking and exchange and communication so cheap and so good that no one could give serious consideration to the idea of dispensing with them, for it is well known to engineers that electric energy and telephone and telegraph service, divested of their waste and advertising and hokum would be so cheap that it would be more economical even for the poor to use them than to live without them. Until that kind of capitalistic thinking comes into the world, we advise consumers to buy their goods and services in each case with the least and least costly intervention of middlemen of every sort, transport companies, tradesmen, installment companies, bankers, brokers and speculators of every ilk. Hire a workman, or a professional man, not a company with preferred debentures and Class B stock and minority and majority stockholders' committees and a vice president in charge of public relations. But when patronage is withdrawn or buying power transferred from one kind of commodity to another, be sure that the dealer or manufacturer always *knows* that you are refraining from buying his product and precisely why.

[Editors' Note: The above article was written upon the basis of data available up to September 13.]

## P-H-A-R-M-O-C-I-S-T 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

A FRIEND of a CR subscriber took a prescription to a drug store to be filled. The pharmacist charged \$1.50, which seemed exorbitant to him. When the medicine was exhausted he took the prescription to another drug store to be filled. Here he was also charged \$1.50. When he had occasion to have the prescription filled a third time, he was still determined to find a reasonably priced drug store and went to a third place. The charge this time was only 35 cents. The customer expressed surprise and the druggist said, "You thought I was going to charge \$1.50, didn't you?" "Yes," said the customer, "How did you know that was what the other drug stores charged?" The druggist pointed to three letters, pmt, in one corner of the prescrip-

tion. "That," he said, "is the price plainly marked for any one who knows the code."

## Watch Cleaning Racket Discovered By CR Subscriber

"I HAVE been the victim of what appears to be another racket and thought other readers of Consumers' Research might save themselves some money, if informed of this one which is new at least to me.

"On June 15th, I paid a jeweler \$2.50 to clean my watch and I have every reason to believe now that he did clean it. Two weeks ago I broke a hair-spring and took the watch to a jeweler here on the campus, Mr. S—, 1215 — Avenue. He told me my watch was very dirty and would have to be cleaned. When I replied that it had been cleaned by another jeweler three weeks previous, he told me that the other jeweler had evidently taken my money, but had not cleaned my watch. Being a gullible consumer, I told Mr. S— to clean the watch, since he believed it needed such treatment. I paid \$4.50 for the hair-spring and cleaning.

"Today the case of my watch rattled so I stepped into Mr. S—'s jewelry store and asked his assistant to tighten the works. He did so. Then he informed me that my watch was very dirty and needed cleaning. He said he would be glad to clean it for a small consideration of \$2.50 or \$3.00. I told the men of this establishment what I think about this new racket.

"Since returning to my office, I have found two individuals who have likewise been relieved of money by the same jeweler and now no doubt the racket may at least suggest itself to other jewelers, if it has not already done so." (From a subscriber)

## New Hazard from Leaded Gasoline

THE HEALTH HAZARDS involved in the leaded gasolines (such as those which contain Ethyl) were discussed in CR's July *Handbook of Buying\** which pointed out that handling leaded fuel or breathing the exhaust gases from cars burning such fuel may result in serious lead poisoning. Here is an example of an unsuspected source of this danger.

An old neighbor of mine in Pleasantville uses a gasoline stove and has been having difficulty lately because it smoked badly. She finally discovered that the gasoline used, the regular kind used in her car, had been doctored with a small amount of tetraethyl lead to pep it up and that this was apparently the trouble. She shopped around among all the stations in the neighborhood and could find none at which the non-premium, ordinary gasoline had not been similarly doctored according to the attendants. I finally located some *Mitchell* gas which supposedly was not as far as the station owner knew. If all of this is true, leaded gas is being sold from tanks without warning signs in some cases. And the gasoline stove user needs special warning. I pass this on to you in case you haven't run into it.

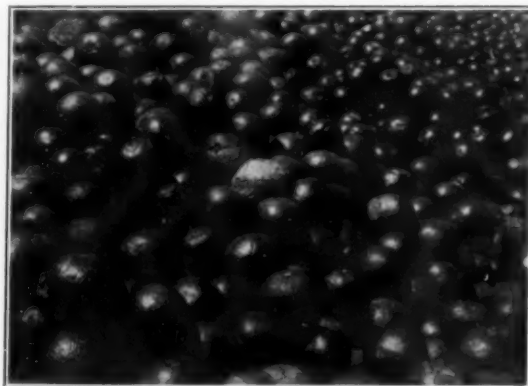
\* Available to subscribers to the confidential service at 35c.

## The Economics of Starvation

IT IS NOT often that the hopeless compartmentalization of thinking in university faculties is thrown into such strong relief as in a sheet of publicity stories recently sent out to the press by the University of California. One Professor E. A. Stokdyk, marketing counselor, in an article written for the Potato Association of America, discusses the successful handling of an economic surplus as being dependent upon action by producers to limit the amount which will be placed upon the market. "This may imply the destruction of a portion of the crop, or the conversion of a portion into by-products. Most attempts to carry over a portion of the crop from one season to the next or longer have resulted disastrously."

In another column of the same issue, on the authority of Professor Ira B. Cross, an economist of the University with a broader view of his science than that of the overspecialized expert in agricultural economics, the statement is made that, "Depressions are due to the present capitalistic system of society and will continue as long as that system prevails. All that can be done is to soften their effects and make them less severe. . . . Alternating periods of prosperity and depression are the results of capitalism, our present system of society. Inasmuch as they are man-made, they should be subject to control by man. But the problem is to find the cause or causes and then to devise the necessary remedies."

The lay reader might reasonably ask if the causes of starvation which exist in the deliberate destruction of edible crops do not come clearly within the category of a social crisis which is "man-made" and hence should be subject to control by man. If the problem is to find the cause or causes and then to devise the necessary remedies, it may be that an economist, even an agricultural economist, who put his mind diligently upon the matter would come to the conclusion that something of a very concrete and immediate nature ought to be done to prevent or to stop the wanton destruction of potatoes in a country where several millions of the population desperately need food and must now do without it for lack of purchasing power. Perhaps in the far-off future there may even be a university where the "agricultural economist" is not permitted to carry on his little compartmental speculations as though agriculture were not dependent upon consumers, and consumers upon agriculture—and the successful living of society as a whole, upon both. Perhaps also, if an agricultural economist is forced by the interest of his particular clients (rather than by that of taxpayers in general who pay his salary and support his institution) to urge or excuse the anti-social practice of destroying food crops, he will at least have a sufficient sense of the obligations of a public servant that he will not fail to consider and give expression to the problem of the surplus potato crop in terms of the interests of the whole citizenry, rather than those of potato-farmers alone.



*Oranges dumped to raise prices while in the cities, the poor starve.*

THE ACCOMPANYING photographs showing enormous quantities of California oranges deliberately destroyed in accordance with a campaign devised to help orange growers at the expense of the consumers of the lowest income or no income at all, illustrates perfectly one of the aspects of New Deal politics and economics to which the newspapers and magazines will not give publicity. This well-organized and skilfully led campaign for destruction of necessary foodstuffs, devised to create prosperity among producers by fostering starvation among consumers is carried forward under the protecting and guiding wing of that great business institution, the University of California, and one of its subsidiaries, a foundation established by the leading California banking interests. The University of California has no foundations to protect the interests of consumers; it would be quite unable to operate such an agency since even its scientific workers are closer to Chamber of Commerce and other business groups than to any other part of California's citizenry.

The destruction illustrated in the photos is all a part of a state program governed closely by the state university, and its Giannini Foundation, and linked into the misnamed national recovery program of the federal government. The larger picture shows a single pile of oranges a mile long dumped near Anaheim, California, by packers who apparently have never seen men ill and hungry in a city breadline, or if they have seen them, see a ledger page more vividly. You may supply your own picture of your own city's breadline to finish out the economic lesson of these pictures. You may also decide for yourself how sincere is the tremendous national advertising of the orange growers on the vital necessity of the orange's vitamin C to the babies and children of the country.\* We may under a profit-motivated economic system pardon the producer of a necessity for not working to produce more of his

\* See "How Advertising Helps to Spread Scientific Ideas Among the Masses," *General Bulletin*, Sept. 1931, 20c.



*A mile-long pile of rotting oranges near Anaheim, Calif.*

product than he can sell to advantage; but if he destroys his product, we are justified in judging him not sincere in his protestations of the indispensable nature of his product; or in thinking that he is not a producer at all, but a business man, a

middleman between nature and her children, who will not make even a merchant's contribution to his customers' welfare unless his guild can collect its full price from those without funds, as well as from the prosperous.

### **The Moving Man—Tricks of the Trade**

**T**HE only safe method of moving or storing one's household effects is to insist that the moving men *at the time the order to move is given* state over the firm's signature, in writing: (1) the exact and full price which will be charged for the moving, and (2) all terms and conditions which the moving company insists upon. The latter should be examined by the housewife with great care, and if they seem inequitable, she should go elsewhere, and not be satisfied with the usual story "that these mean nothing, but the boss insists on them."

It is a common practice of moving men to quote a certain price for the moving and to say nothing about terms and conditions. When the men call for the effects they generally ask that the "order blank" be signed and say that they cannot move unless it is signed. The housewife, generally extremely flustered because of the moving process, signs her name to the "order blank" without any thought and generally without reading it. When the furnishings arrive at their destination, she is asked to sign another paper variously termed as "receipt," "duplicate order," etc. Nothing is ever heard about these doc-

uments unless there is loss or damage, in which case the housewife and her husband discover to their sorrow that she has signed two very oppressive papers.

The need for the customer's insistence upon a set price in writing is due to the fact that it is customary for moving men when the goods arrive at their destination to advance the price originally agreed upon. It should be recalled that the moving men often insist on payment before any of the household effects are unloaded. Then frequently they ask for more money than the sum originally agreed upon. Various tricks are used to obtain these extra amounts. For example, they may claim that they did not see the piano when the estimate was made, and that "the union" demands a flat extra charge of \$10 for moving it; or that the job had taken longer than they had expected it to and that the price was only a minimum price, or an "estimate." While the housewife may be very angry at these statements, she is practically forced to pay the price demanded in order to obtain possession of her furniture and effects. Sometimes, though not

frequently, if the additional money is not paid, a part of the effects will be delivered and the rest taken back in the van. The housewife may find that she has agreed in her contract that the moving men may store the effects at the usual storage rates until the entire amount demanded is paid and in the end the housewife discovers that she is forced to pay even more than the price agreed on because of her resistance to the unfair extra charges.

The order blank may also turn out to be a contract with a great many terms in small type to which the housewife has paid little attention. Such a contract, among other things, may provide that under no circumstances shall the moving company be responsible for any breakage or damage to fragile articles unless the goods have been packed by its employees. In the moving men's dictionary "fragile" apparently means anything to be moved which could conceivably be broken, and there are instances on record where such things as marble-topped tables and iron andirons have been placed in the fragile class. Sometimes the contract includes a clause to the effect that the householder agrees that no piece or package which is to be moved is valued at more than \$50. It may further provide that if a valuation has been placed on the goods and effects, no piece rates a greater value than its proportionate part of the whole number of pieces. For example, if the shipment is valued at \$2,000 and there are two hundred pieces, the value of a *Steinway* Baby Grand piano, if damaged, would be put at exactly \$10; however, if a piece were lost that was worth just ten cents, 10 cents—not \$10—would be the full amount that could be recovered. In this connection it should be noted that when a moving company offers to provide "insurance" at a slight extra cost, the insurance frequently contains such a limitation of valuation as has been noted above, and the housewife should therefore insist that she be allowed to examine the insurance policy. Many other similar provisions in moving contracts could be pointed out. It is suggested that the surest method of obtaining insurance (although it is a bit more costly) is to have one's own insurance agent write the proper moving policy; this confines the moving company to the business of moving and keeps them from cheating you on insurance.

The paper which the housewife is asked to sign upon delivery of the goods consists of a receipt in which it is stated that she has examined all the contents of the van and the same are undamaged, etc., etc.—all this of course before the furnishings have been unloaded and their condition determined. In the few instances in which the housewife reads the paper and protests that she has not seen the goods and cannot therefore state whether or not they are unharmed, she is generally told by the driver that "the paper is simply a receipt which the boss requires as a matter of form" and is assured that if there proves later to be any damage, of course she can collect from the moving company. In the event, however, of any damage and the case being brought to the courts the driver's memory will fail him, for good and sufficient reasons. He will remember making no such statement; indeed he will recall that

the housewife said the goods were in first-class condition and willingly signed the paper after reading it over, and complimented the men on the workmanlike manner in which the goods had been moved.

Types of contracts similar to these mentioned above are sometimes offered when goods are to be stored in a warehouse. Certain racketeer types of storage men have pictures of fireproof buildings on their vans and in their advertising matter. It develops that the contract the housewife is asked to sign contains a provision that, unless specifically directed in writing, the warehouseman need not store the goods in a fireproof warehouse but can store them in any warehouse. Another clause may follow which states that a warehouseman is not responsible for fire or damage from moths. Whether or not the goods are sent to a fireproof warehouse, some provision should be made with an insurer or with the warehouseman to cover damage by moths; and under all circumstances the housewife should insist upon a written agreement that the goods will be taken to and stored in a fireproof warehouse and/or that the moving men be liable for any damage by reason of fire.

The purpose of this article is not to imply that the practices spoken of are used by all moving men and warehousemen. There are many honest and fair firms, particularly in smaller cities and towns, to whom the housewife can go. But in order to assure herself that it is a reliable firm she is dealing with and that she is protected in the event of negligence or loss, she will do well to take precautions against being victimized by the racketeering practices just described. On the whole, much safer moving, and less risk of sharp practice, will be obtained from small local movers where the owner of the business is in close touch with operations, often directing them himself. Such men usually have a larger sense of responsibility than the paid employee of a large corporation. They will not as a rule force upon their customer a burdensome or unfair contract and if they do not carry proper insurance themselves, they will readily advise the customer where to obtain it.

It can readily be seen, therefore, that the most important thing to bear in mind when planning to move or store household effects, is to read carefully any document presented for signature, especially one which must be signed on the spot. Be certain that the price and conditions are simply and concisely expressed and thoroughly understood.

PHILIP G. PHILLIPS.

### Buying Coal Scientifically

CONSUMERS who use coal in heating their dwellings were advised by CR in the July 1932 *Handbook of Buying\** to secure data on the relative merits of coal before purchasing their winter's supply. It was suggested that comparison be made on the basis of the following points, Btu (British thermal units) value, percentage of ash, percentage of volatile matter, and percentage of sulphur. Other items to be considered are convenience in handling, uniformity of size, ease of igniting, burning qual-

\* Available to subscribers to the confidential service at 35c.



ities, freedom from dirt, slate, and other impurities. At least one CR subscriber attempted to secure such data and has passed on to us the results:

About a week ago I wrote the ten members of the Retail Coal Dealers Association as follows:

I am in the market for my winter's coal and naturally wish to buy the best coal I can at the best price I can. If you care to submit a certified analysis and price list for your coal I shall be glad to consider it. The results were as follows:

One dealer promptly supplied the required information without fuss or feathers.

One dealer wrote that I had failed to state the size of coal in which I was interested and if I would tell the size they would give me the information I wanted. I did so and the information was given me by telephone.

One dealer had a man call who gave a long sales talk, and said that no one else had ever asked that information. He gave an approximate analysis verbally.

One dealer called himself, said no one else had ever asked for an analysis, and said that such information was useless, all this interspersed with a very long sales talk. At first, then in spite of insistence, he refused to furnish an analysis, then agreed to furnish one verbally and at long last agreed to give me one in writing. That, however, was the last I ever heard of him. One called himself, said my request was silly, refused to give an analysis, but did give a long sales talk. (Couldn't shut him up). Five didn't pay any attention to my letter. I bought from the first mentioned dealer. His analysis was 9.4% ash and 13,630 Btu. (He also gave the other figures but I was principally interested in ash and Btu's.)

### From a Dentist-Subscriber

CONSUMERS' RESEARCH, INC.:

**A** BOUQUET of razberries for the following current advertising degeneracies:

1. *Absorbine Jr.* at \$1.25 a bottle, rubbed on the back of your neck, upon retiring, cures your insomnia, your "nerves loose their tension. Before you know it, you drift into deep, refreshing sleep." (It is no longer necessary to drink some concoction to assure yourself of going to sleep quickly and snoring right thru the night. Now, you need only rub it on the nape of your neck.)

2. "Now, you can eat well—eat plenty—the very foods you crave," smoke and drink excessively—and escape the natural consequences by eating two or three *Tums*. (Here is a wonderful substitute for common sense, by which the laws of nature may be insulted and violated at will, safely and joyously.)

3. The horror-striking close-up of an extraction forceps, with one of your teeth gripped in it, the whole ensemble gripped by some bird who posed as a dentist, and looked quite distraught and preoccupied with his posing the correct angle. Words: "Gone. Film's work is done." This horrible picture represents what happens to people who do not brush their teeth with *Pepsodent*, "the special film-

removing tooth paste." In the copy is exploited the discarded slogan, "A clean tooth never decays," which is a fallacy. (Film, in this connection, is a catch word for advertising use. Eating an apple is a good, natural "film remover." This ad should scare a lot of distracted mortals into buying *Pepsodent*, who have not yet been browbeaten into it by some other means.)

4. "It's going to hurt—but that's what acid mouth costs you!" "Acid mouth—the enemy of your teeth. The driller of thousands of tiny holes." And, a close-up of a huge hand advancing upon you with a scaling instrument grasped in it. "*Pebeco* says 'Stop' to acid mouth." (But, it is extremely doubtful whether "acid mouth" hears the command. Poor, suffering, gullible humanity will be led to believe that they can escape the ravages of acid mouth—whatever that is—by using *Pebeco*. The truth is, of course, that excessive acidity of the mouth is usually of systemic origin, and must be treated from that angle.)

5. *Ovaltine*—"makes your child hungry for vegetables and doubles the amount of milk he'll drink." (Wonderful invention!)

6. Some doctor in far away Budapest recommended *Woodbury's* soap to an admittedly, already beautiful girl in Hungary. "The skin became soft and smooth as velvet. (Therefore, you can take an alley cat in America and accomplish the same result.)

7. You can play checkers better with *Chase & Sanborn's* dated coffee under your belt. People, who "seem to excel in everything they do frankly use coffee as a stimulant . . . to keep up their energy . . . to drive away fatigue." (Where does the energy come from, eventually? But, it should be dated coffee, or "you can easily get indigestion or nerves or sleeplessness from stale coffee.")

8. "Get rid of pink tooth brush with *Ipana* tooth paste." How? (Pink tooth brush may be gotten rid of by brushing the gums in the correct manner, to harden them up as a substitute for the "harsh" foods which we do not eat, with any or no tooth paste, provided also, that salivary and mild serumnal calculus is first removed, if present to any degree, that diet is corrected, that general health balance is restored, that there is no pyorrhea or Vincent's infection, and if direct and indirect irritants are avoided or eliminated, and a few other things done or undone. It would be great, if *Ipana* tooth paste would cure bleeding gums or even stop your face bleeding, when you cut yourself while shaving in the morning.)

9. The multiple miracles which the multitudes of patent mouth washes will perform are now become so obviously ridiculous as not to require comment.

Copy from which above quotations and comments were drawn may be checked by going through the standard ads appearing in numerous "high class" magazines. The claims also are used in radio perpetrations, as CR is fully aware.

Enclosed material and comment may or may not be of any use in your campaign for cleaning up advertising, etc. In either event, it is evidence of a subscriber's interest. H. C. KNIGHT, D.D.S.

## Sidelights on the Food and Drugs Act

WE SUGGESTED in the last *General Bulletin*\* that the problem of what the revision of the Food and Drugs Act should cover should be handled by scientists and technicians and not by lawyers and bureaucrats. The need for scientists with some sense of the rights of consumers is nicely illustrated by the following complex form of adulteration which only a highly skilled technician could detect.

Current technical literature contains repeated references to the use of cranberry as a means of restricting fermentation in fermentable beverages. The most recent application is protected by a United States patent granted to Adolf Lewinson. The juice of the cranberry is a natural source of the preservative benzoic acid and its use does away with the addition of benzoate of soda which the authorities require be labelled on the container. [Italics ours—CR] (*National Carbonator and Bottler*, July 15, 1933)

FEW PAPERS that oppose the proposed revision of the Food and Drugs Act will be quite so frank about its invasion of their interests as this editor is:

Frankly admitting that his interest in the subject is due to a possible loss of advertising should the proposed new Food and Drugs Act become law, Frederick Sullens, editor of the Jackson Daily News, has appealed to all Mississippi Congressmen and United States Senators that they oppose the pending bill. . . . "The proposed measure would hit such products as *Aspirin*, *Bromo-Quinine*, *Listerine*, *Ovaltine* and even *Fleischman Yeast* and *Kellogg's Bran Flakes* as well as a host of other items," says Mr. Sullens and continues, "Frankly I am interested in this because many of these products are extensively advertised, in fact they form at least 10 per cent of our advertising revenues. We are now having, in common with all other newspapers, a hard fight for existence and I am making this personal appeal to you to oppose the measure in its present form. Congress has quite enough matters of world-wide importance to deal with at this time, without allowing itself to be victimized by a lobby bought and paid for by the American Medical Association."\*\* (*Drug Trade News*, July 24, 1933)

CR ALSO pointed out in the July *General Bulletin* that the tolerance of .014 grains per pound of fruit for lead residues on fruit set by the Department of Agriculture which had heretofore professed not to tolerate lead in any amount was far higher than technicians unbiased by any commercial or political connections would regard as safe. This figure,

\* *Food and Drug Administration Discovers the Consumer*, *General Bulletin*, July 1933—reprint sent free of charge on receipt of stamped envelope.

\*\* The American Medical Association has not lobbied on this matter unless secretly and to some end not made public or known to the Mississippi editor. Its journal has ignored the whole question, and has indeed poooh-pooohed the assertions of those who have presented evidence of need for new legislation on food and drug matters, surely a subject the A.M.A. should be interested in.

however, was still too drastic for the apple growers and a trade journal reports the beginnings (and result) of business pressure to change the ruling.

Governor A. Harry Moore of New Jersey has sent to the Secretary of Agriculture a protest against the reduction of the limit of lead in spray residue on fruit. Mr. Moore declares that the reduction, which he says is approximately 60 per cent, is unwarranted and sets an impracticable limit. Fruit growers, he says, cannot adjust their operations to the new requirement at this late date. The expense of equipment necessary in attempting to meet the requirement cannot be borne by New Jersey fruit growers at this time, the governor says.

Mr. Moore says the state of New Jersey has made large appropriations over the past five years to study the spray-residue situation. As a result of these studies, he adds, growers have spent thousands of dollars for washing equipment. He raises the point that the use of lead-arsenate spray should not be further restricted until the Department of Agriculture is able to recommend satisfactory substitutes. (*Oil, Paint, and Drug Reporter*, April 24, 1933)

From this we might assume that New Jersey is a state without consumers. As usual, business interests were given preference over consumers' safety and the legal limit for lead was increased to .02.

As has been noted in recent numbers of *Virginia Fruit* the U. S. Food and Drug Administration issued a tolerance of .014 for "LEAD" residue. This came very late and unexpectedly and was bound to work a great hardship on the apple industry.

Senator Harry F. Byrd together with a number of other members of congress, with the support of this Society and other members of the Eastern Apple Growers Council, as well as that of various interested organizations, presented to Department officials the injustice of the situation and as a result the Food and Drug Administration has recently announced that the tolerance for "LEAD" had been raised to (.02). The entire fruit industry is indeed fortunate in having Senator Harry F. Byrd in Washington. I am sure that I express the views of all of the fruit-growers of this and other states in thanking him for his splendid efforts in behalf of the industry. (*Virginia Fruit*, July 1933)

It is obvious that if consumers were as well organized and as conscious of their interests as the apple growers, a governor of New Jersey and a senator for Virginia with a less commercial outlook would be elected. Surely the failure of the democratic principle in a host of such cases known to almost any citizen, may suggest that what we really have is a government by business, merely masquerading as a democracy.

## The Department Store—People's Friend?

### II

THE DISCERNING consumer in his dealings with department stores is not protected by his own knowledge or training. Is he protected by the sound sense, special consideration, technical competence, or honest effort of the store or any of its employees? First, as to the department store's buyers.

Surely men whose job it is to buy best quality at lowest prices must know enough of their business to discard the really bad products. Only partially. In the first place, it is not so much a buyer's job to get best quality at lowest prices, as to get quickest turnover with largest profits. This will not weed out goods which from the consumer's point of view are bad, since these may from the retailer's point of view be very good—witness the whole cosmetics racket. In the second place, the day of the buyer who is expert in the sense of his knowing the technologies of his goods is over. In his place is the expert merchandiser, who must know the routines of retailing, be able to figure most profitable relation of quantity and variety of stock to turnover, invent new simplified means of taking inventory, and always keep ahead of costs. He must be ready to apply his formulae and slide rule calculations to face powders, radio sets, household appliances, or children's books—as the boss orders. The old-time buyer who could tell as much about a piece of china as could Berenson about a quattrocento portrait is gone, and in his place is the man who must, with equal facility, make the world beat a path to a mousetrap or an evening dress.

Laboratories and testing, however, must surely be of some benefit to the consumer. Of course they are, and they would be much more so were there more of them and were they more honestly used. There are practically no store laboratories. The Associated Dry Goods Corporation of New York, to which seven or eight stores belong, stopped much of its testing work (which even in its heyday had been largely confined to work on textiles and cosmetics) and gave up its laboratory in 1930—as one of the first economy measures to combat the depression.

The National Retail Dry Goods Association, which has about 3400 members including accountants, department stores, and specialty shops, provides one laboratory, the Better Fabrics Testing Bureau, which confines its work to research on and testing of textiles. With the exception of one arrangement, the B. F. T. B. tests are made, not as one might suppose for the stores as a group, but at the request and expense of a particular manufacturer or retailer, results being turned over to the sponsor of the test and not to other members of the Association. Despite its having evidenced so little interest in the quality of goods, the N. R. D. G. A. launched the 1932 National Quality Movement—urging consumers to buy better quality merchandise at higher prices. We have not noted any

publicity for that campaign urging department stores to provide goods which had been proved better or to determine by test that they were actually doing so. The stores appear not to know *how* to tell quality goods; nor to have any interest in quality except as an implication of higher prices.

The two large mail order houses, Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward, have laboratories. The J. C. Penney chain has a testing laboratory which appears to test more kinds of goods than do most other store laboratories. Kaufmann's department store in Pittsburgh has established a research fellowship at Mellon Institute. Only Macy's, among Eastern department stores, has had a fairly active testing agency of its own for any considerable time. Recently Gimbel's in Philadelphia has materially helped the paper and newspaper industries by its announcement, following Macy's misleading nomenclature, of a Gimbel "Bureau of Standards." (This was very soon after the New York Gimbel's took over as head of its advertising department that Mr. Kenneth Collins who had engineered the Macy Bureau of Standards ballyhoo. There is, therefore, some ground for the theory that the laboratory's establishment had its genesis in the advertising department.) The *Philadelphia Record* of January 2 in a full-page, bold-face outburst proclaimed the big news:

A complete modern laboratory in full public view on our sixth floor with equipment hitherto unheard of in department stores, with chemists and engineers whose job it is to know scientifically in advance the wear and service qualities of Gimbel merchandise. Everything certified by the Gimbel Bureau of Standards can be bought with utmost confidence, for certified goods will give you greater satisfaction and better value than goods you can buy elsewhere at the same price.

A letter addressed by CR to the Bureau of Standards care of Gimbel Brothers, Philadelphia, was answered on the letterhead of an outside testing laboratory. A second letter from that laboratory gave details as follows:

With reference to yours of January 18th regarding the Gimbel Bureau of Standards, please be advised that the following are the facts:

1. The ———— Research Corp. is an independent organization neither owned nor controlled in any way by Gimbel Brothers. The Gimbel chain is merely one of our clients and furnishes but a small part of the present income. The activities of this Bureau are to be extended over the entire chain. Work of this research bureau is now in the process of being extended to large department stores in cities where Gimbel has no representation.

2. The work of this concern for 12 years past has been employed in a consultant capacity for the research and development of woollens, worsteds, and fabrics made from synthetic fibers, by mills, clothing manufacturers, and the better retail stores.

3. The \_\_\_\_\_—Research Corp. is acting in capacity of Gimbel's Bureau of Standards, not for the purpose of testing all the merchandise in the stores, but with the view to applying scientific research in the development of merchandise with a better competitive quality and a longer life.

4. We have about a dozen employes among whom are chemists, physicists, and chemical engineers.

That appears to be the "whole truth"—and not the "commercial truth" as Gimbel's apt euphemism has it, about the Gimbel Bureau of Standards.

The Macy Laboratory is, without doubt, the best department store laboratory in the country. Yet its testing work did not prevent the store's pushing any number of inferior insecticides. It did not stop their selling countless high-priced and ineffective cosmetics, or large numbers of medical quackeries such as *Vapex* and *Listerine*, or their private brand equivalents. As a matter of fact, we are informed that most of the tests are on goods already in stock—not on samples considered for purchase. "Tests before purchase are made where a store believes it may be headed for trouble," the head of the Macy laboratory is quoted as saying, in a trade paper. The laboratory's prestige is, consequently, used in a way which encourages the sale of inferior goods, since the store's advertising has not always clearly differentiated between things which have passed test and goods which failed to pass or have never been tested. "They Shall Not Pass!" says a Macy advertisement showing a picture of irate umbrellas, lamps, coats, and cans held up in their progress by a determined and learned-looking technician—"At least not until they've undergone inspection by Macy's vigilant Bureau of Standards." The inference in this and other advertisements is unmistakable: that all or a major proportion of the goods Macy's sells are tested and pass the tests.

Some store laboratory tests have been important and have quite evidently saved consumers from serious harm or loss. Other tests result in astounding advertising copy, but perhaps no very startling contribution to science or substantial consumer protection. It is said that to obtain data for an advertisement for mosquito repellent stockings, store employes rowed girls around in boats for hours.

*Twenty-one* bites were reported on the unprotected legs, and *none* on the legs wearing those chemically treated hose. It was an impressive test, but not enough to prove that these stockings defy any mosquito anywhere. Tough old fellows zooming at you suddenly will still be unpleasant. But the young mosquitoes—and there are trillions—who alight before they sting, will be driven away by the odor of the chemical before they sting. (You can't smell it at all.)

It will be a comfort to know that bites received through these stockings will be exclusively from tough old mosquitoes. The ad fails to tell the proportion of mosquito population which is tough and old, nor does it tell whether the repellent quality of the stockings outlast a laundering, or even a wearing.

Even though science in a store's employ be made sometimes to play the buffoon for advertising purposes, and even though science in the main be used to heap up profits (as the store, looking at science from the practical point of view, puts it, "Complaints aren't any more fun for a merchant than for his public"), there is in its use some protection for the consumer. Yet the extent to which this protection may be considered a primary and sincere reason for a merchant's supporting a laboratory can be judged by the fact that one store put on exhibition as though it were a regular part of its testing equipment a machine rented only for the duration of its advertising campaign elaborately featuring the testing work. Further, it is said that the store took on additional purely temporary employes at low wages, almost doubling the number in its testing bureau for the time the testing idea was being advertised in newspapers, and in the store where customers were allowed to watch the tame technicians make their tests. Tests were made, chemists were exhibited under glass, and advertisements were run, but the idea of consumer protection got lost somewhere. One report has it that some awnings were tested in this laboratory and found sadly wanting in tensile strength and other factors entering into an enlightened customer's conception of the ideal awning. When the adverse test report was shown to the awning buyer, that dignitary implored the technicians to change their report, as the goods had to go on sale in a day or two. Someone was assigned the job of doctoring the copy. In the store's advertising appeared the statement, "The unique feature of this sale is that all merchandise *which is expected to withstand hard usage has been tested and approved . . .*" [italics ours]; and farther on, "Hollywood Awnings in green and green or green and orange stripes on heavy duck. Should give satisfactory use for one season. 29, 36, 42 inches." We would call that advertisement an exceptionally honest one—and yet how many customers would read into the announcement anything approaching the practical import of the qualification, "should give satisfactory use for one season"? "They need not pass—but they must be sold" might be an accurate slogan for department store testing.

That reputable department stores are, at least by everyone but themselves, considered to have a definite responsibility to the consuming public is shown by the following quotation from a letter written by the manufacturer of a depilatory. ". . . Our product is sold only through high class department stores which alone is a voucher for its safety and value." The product was a cream depilatory called *Koremlu*, advertising that it "not only removes hair for all time, but is most beneficial to the skin itself . . . apply it to the skin like cold cream." It was also advertised as completely harmless. Consumers'



Research subscribers already know the facts in the case: The active ingredient in the cream was thallium acetate, an exceedingly poisonous chemical having no known antidote (the American Medical Association reported 30 cases of horrible poisoning involving nervous disorders, loss of eyesight, unbearable pain,—results of the use of *Koremlu*); the cream removed hair all over the body—from the head, eyebrows, etc., not only from the place where it had been applied; fortunately, the claims of permanent depilation were also mythical, and if the user had escaped or recovered from blindness, paralysis, polyneuritis, and kidney involvements, she would also likely recover from baldness; and, the little jar of cream, which cost its manufacturer something less than 35c, sold for \$10. That point also has its importance. Had there not been such a nice wide margin of profit, it is very likely that department stores, the Better Business Bureau, city departments of health, and magazines would never have set their minds to working out the buck-passing game they contrived.

The department stores' own watchdog, the National Better Business Bureau, knew the dangers in the use of thallium acetate as far back as December 1930, when it issued the following statement: "Applied externally, our authorities tell us, thallium acetate can have no depilatory action unless in some manner it is absorbed and one gets the systematic action of the drug. If this were to happen, they point out, the use of the preparation would be fraught with danger." *Koremlu* had evidently appeared on the market some time before this—but mainly as a mail order product, that is, in competition with the kind of business which supports the Better Business Bureau. Then it went in for the department store and specialty shop business. In February 1931 the Better Business Bureau sent out a special report repeating the general advice in its earlier bulletin and adding that the American Medical Association had record of five cases of poisoning attributed to use of *Koremlu*. As the product became better known—to consumers through advertising in reputable magazines and sales in reputable stores; to the American Medical Association through reports of cases of poisoning following its use—the Better Business Bureau was evidently persuaded to countenance the profits which the stores derived from *Koremlu* sales. "A conference was held between representatives of the Bureau and representatives of *Koremlu* Inc., including a well-known scientist." (Any scientist would have done; it's SCIENCE one needs in retailing.) The March Better Business Bureau bulletin was an uncritical report of the *Koremlu* consultant's statements. The poisonings were dealt with lightly and rather academically, and the Better Business Bureau announced that it was "continuing its investigation of this proposition. . . ." Then the New York City Department of Health passed the product, merely requiring that it be labeled "for external use only." The Better Business Bureau did not fail to announce the news. Meanwhile the American Medical Association continued to pile up and publish evidence of poisonings.

Here was a nice decision for the stores. Their

own guardian of morals had first warned against the product and later whitewashed it. The Department of Health had failed to bar its sale. But there was obviously a substantial doubt of its safety, and the American Medical Association continued a vigorous and well-documented attack. Would the stores give the consumer the benefit of the doubt? A very few did. But many of the largest and most imposing ones continued to sell *Koremlu* to their customers. Of 15 New York stores investigated, nine sold the product, five did not carry depilatories at all, and one sold depilatories, but not *Koremlu*, and later advertised that its testing laboratory had saved it from exposing consumers to the dangers of thallium acetate.

The more naïve among us might ask whether a department store doesn't assume some risk in selling obviously inferior or dangerous goods. *Koremlu* Inc. failed with over two million dollars in claims against it, representing damages sought by persons who had used its product. Voluntary bankruptcy was the convenient expedient by which the promoters could evade settlement and, after the acquisition of a new corporate form and name, go on to the manufacture of a new depilatory. The department stores, too, although they are not clever enough, even with all circumstances in their favor, to stock good goods and make a profit, have been sufficiently thoughtful of their own interests to protect themselves against damages, passing on their responsibility, back to the manufacturer from whom goods are purchased. This is done by contracting that the manufacturer shall "hold the retailer harmless" from any claims arising out of consumers' use of the manufacturer's product. The manufacturer is willing to assume responsibility for such claims because he in turn has protected himself by a product-liability insurance policy. That leaves the consumer holding the bag. He may sue a large insurance company with its panoply of sharp and well-connected lawyers; or he may refuse to pay his charge account if he likes; or he may, so far as illness, doctor bills, depleted funds, and shoddy or worthless goods permit, forget it.

We believe, however, that there is still a third course open to the consumer, and that is, aggressive demand on his part for protection. If the retailer insists on insuring himself before he buys from the manufacturer, we believe that the consumer can insure himself before buying from the retailer by insisting that his purchases be specifically labeled and the seller's responsibility specifically covered in sales slips or in letters, either notation signed by a responsible officer in the retail establishment, insuring to the consumer the return of his money if the goods prove to be misrepresented or are not satisfactory. We believe that if the consumer must buy a product by which he is subjected to a hazard of any kind, he should insist on having the store guarantee him the return of his money and costs should he suffer any damages to himself, his health, or his possessions by the fault or failure of his purchase. We advise the consumer to remember that all these stores (the Eastern ones necessarily used as a basis for this article are probably, entirely apart from their very advanced and cultivated advertis-

ing techniques, better and more intelligently managed and staffed rather than inferior to department stores elsewhere) in many respects like any other profit-making ventures, cannot allow other considerations to interfere with the all-important one of making a profit. Since the consumer is motivated in his purchasing by the pleasure or use he expects to get from the product, he can assure himself that pleasure only by combating the store's profit-motivated tactics, himself using the precise protective measures which the store has adopted to insure itself undisturbed collection of its profit. Department stores have been known to be foolish, consumers are well known to be suckers. Surely, however, intelligent consumers can learn to be somewhat more competent buyers than some of the incidents herein related show the stores to be.

E. S. LOEB.

(This is the second and concluding part of this article of which the first part appeared in the July 1933 number of the *General Bulletin*).

### More On Correspondence Schools

**I**N AN ARTICLE entitled "Correspondence Schools and Their Contribution to Quackery in Education" published in the *General Bulletin* 2.70, October 1932, the statement was made that:

Under the rules governing admission to the bar, time spent studying law by correspondence is not recognized by 45 States, nor by the District of Columbia. However, anyone may take a bar examination in Nevada, Alabama or Georgia and, if successful, practice law there (whether he has taken a correspondence course or not).

Dr. J. F. Noffsinger of the National Home Study Council of Washington, D. C., a trade association of the leading correspondence schools, was greatly incensed at the comments on correspondence school practices and training, particularly by the above paragraph. In a lengthy correspondence he accused CR of publishing an article which was a deliberate and wilful misrepresentation of fact. He further stated:

There are *forty four* states in the United States where correspondence courses may be taken which will of themselves *or in conjunction with a law clerkship*, qualify the student for admission to the state bar examination, and not three states as this article indicated. [Italics ours—CR]

This "correction" is itself most misleading; CR said nothing about a law clerkship in the sentence which Dr. Noffsinger objected to, and the introduction of this idea is an ingenious, and for many, an effectual way of diverting attention from the real issue. The shrewd logic-chopper of the correspondence schools' head office neglects to set forth the fact that the qualification which he unobtrusively introduced will need to be applied in nearly every case; that the law clerkship alone will usually qualify the student for admission to the state bar examination, and that the correspondence school course ("in conjunction with the law clerkship") may be a needless, if costly, decoration of the candidate's intellectual preparation. Dr. Noffsinger's

restatement of the situation would imply that CR has said that a person taking a correspondence school training would be disqualified by this educational preparation. Of course, no such implication or statement was made by us. The test of the sincerity of Dr. Noffsinger's qualification would be whether correspondence school promoters refrained from encouraging persons other than law clerks from taking their courses. Yet, curiously enough, correspondence school advertisements appear habitually, not in the legal journals read by law clerks, but in popular love story magazines.

CR finds that there are 34 or 35 states besides the District of Columbia in which a candidate, by studying in a law office for from one to four years, can qualify for *examination* for admission to the bar. Unfortunately, in several of these 35 states the requirements as to law study are so loosely administered that it is entirely possible for applicants who have studied law in a correspondence school to secure, from a friendly attorney, a certificate that the requisite time has been spent "under his supervision," or even "in his office." The student may by this questionable means, which in our opinion does not improve the likelihood of the budding lawyer's acquiring a fully ethical view of his calling as an honored and privileged "officer of the court," fulfill all technical requirements for permission to take the bar examination. In these several states correspondence school courses as such neither qualify nor disqualify. There are four states which definitely require study at a recognized (resident) law school as a preliminary qualification for admission to the bar.

CR finds that at the present time there are only nine or ten states which have no requirement of law study of any kind to qualify a candidate to take the bar examination. In those states a correspondence school diploma, or reading law books over the breakfast table, or no reading at all are equally suitable qualifications for taking bar examinations. Correspondence schools therefore, by suppression of one of the most essential elements of the problem of any individual preparing for admission to legal practice, deceive those who are least able by experience and familiarity with educational and professional customs and relationships to guard themselves against a heavy cost and from selection of a mediocre or wasteful method of training.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. William de Funiak,\* who has a wide knowledge of correspondence school legal training, writes:

To the list of States given in your *General Bulletin* 2.70 in which study in a law correspondence school is accepted as a prerequisite to admission to the bar, you may add two other states, California and Indiana.

The Indiana State constitution formerly provided that every voter of the state of good moral character was by right entitled to practice law. (See article "Attorney & Client," vol. 6, Corpus

\* Mr. William de Funiak, university graduate lawyer, admitted to practice by bar examination in the states of Kentucky and California, also a member of the Bar Association of San Francisco and of the Barristers Club of San Francisco, also editor and writer for legal encyclopedias and other works on the law.

Juris, p. 569, note 38a.) While this constitutional provision is now obsolete, it still seems that no law study of any kind is necessary to prepare one for the practice of law in Indiana. All that is necessary is to present proof of your good moral character to the court, and you are entitled to admission. Under such conditions as these I imagine that Indiana is a happy hunting ground of law correspondence schools. Personally, I should hesitate to employ a lawyer in Indiana until I had seen his diploma from some law school of high standing.

In California, the situation is somewhat different and I confess to great surprise upon learning that they recognized law correspondence school work. Curiously enough, California has some very strict regulation upon the question of admission to the bar. It is necessary to pass a very stiff three-day examination, and to qualify to take the examination you must register your intention in advance, at the time you take up the study of law. Very complete papers must subsequently be filed showing your work in law school, the number of hours, letters from the dean of the school, copies of the catalog, etc. Now in most states in which a certain number of years study in law school is prerequisite to the right to take the bar examination, study in a correspondence school is specifically excluded. I had supposed that to be the case here, and I was surprised at the boldness with which the law correspondence schools, especially the LaSalle Extension University, advertised. The other day I made personal inquiry of the secretary of the committee of bar examiners of the State Bar and was informed that work in such a school is considered sufficient law school work to permit one to take the bar examination.

The LaSalle Extension University advertises extensively, and gives the usual examples of its students who enjoyed salary increases and promotions. The value of such a course in preparation for the practice of law is, of course, absolutely nothing. Law is a very complex profession, and is mastered, if at all, only after years of study and practice. No superficial course in a correspondence school, with texts by hack writers, and the absence of personal instruction and

supervision from experienced and learned professors, will qualify one for the practice of law.

The poor preparation provided by these schools is partially responsible for the high number of failures here of those taking the bar examinations. Figures made public recently by the Committee of Bar Examiners of the California State Bar show that while 52 per cent of the applicants taking the August 1932, bar examination passed it, the percentage of correspondence school students taking this examination who passed was only 22.6 per cent. And one third of the correspondence school students taking the examination were taking the bar examination over for the fourth or more time. This in itself is a fine commentary on the poor preparation.

[Editors' Note—The compilation of the above data has proved a slow and difficult task inasmuch as leading authorities whom we have consulted do not agree among themselves as to the number of states which do not recognize correspondence school training. We quote from the *State Bar Journal* of California, April 1933, to illustrate the difficulties of reaching any certain judgment with respect to whether a candidate who has completed correspondence school training will be permitted to take the examination. In the majority of states, unfortunately for the correspondence school student, there is no doubt whatever that his training will not qualify him:

Out of 49 States, in which are located 160,605 lawyers, there are 36 States, having 121,448 lawyers (75½ per cent), which decline to recognize certificates from correspondence schools. There are two states (Georgia, 2,813, and Mississippi, 1,249) having 4,062 lawyers, which the writer has been unable to check and ascertain whether or not these certificates are accepted.

Four States (Alabama, 1,598; Indiana, 3,818; Nevada, 231; and Virginia, 2,419) with 8,066 lawyers do not prescribe any legal education certificate, "so that the question of recognition of correspondence schools does not arise."

There are two States (Idaho, 580 lawyers, and Massachusetts, 6,940) aggregating 7,520 lawyers, in which the certificate of a correspondence school is accepted in connection with reading under a practicing attorney.

There seem to be five States (Arkansas, 1,512; California, 10,109; Montana, 714; Texas, 6,591; and Utah, 603), with a total of 19,509 lawyers, who accept correspondence school certificates, "absent treatment," in law instruction. (Italics ours—CR)

It should be noticed that in the above the California *State Bar Journal* has omitted the states Missouri and Florida, which, incidentally, have no ruling for or against correspondence schools.]

## Household Lubricating Oils

### Many Well Known Brands Found Harmful To Devices Which They Lubricate

TO THE WOMAN who buys lubricating oil for the sewing machine or a squeaking hinge on the door, a can of oil is just oil, or probably *Three-In-One*, since that is the brand most frequently advertised in women's magazines. Even the man of the house, unless he has some technical or engineering knowledge, may not know that seven times out of thirteen he may buy an oil which injures rather than protects delicate mechanisms.

Household lubricating oils are intended chiefly for the lubrication of light appliances, such as sew-

ing machines, locks, typewriters, motion picture projectors, lawn mowers and farm implements, furniture casters, door hinges, etc. In recent tests made for Consumers' Research, many brands of these so-called household lubricating oils on the market were found to be totally unsuited to the purpose for which they are sold.

To lubricate satisfactorily they must possess certain characteristics:

(1) They must be of a rather fluid consistency, while still retaining the ability to hold together and

maintain a film over a surface. There is danger that viscous (thick and slow-flowing) oils may fail to reach the surfaces requiring lubrication.

(2) In a household lubricant it is desirable that the viscosity should not be greatly affected by changes of temperature.

(3) It is essential that lubricating oils contain no free mineral acid, and little free fatty or paraffinic acid. The presence of sulphur compounds in oil will also cause corrosion.

(4) The temperature at which the oil will "flash" when tested with a flame, and the temperature at which it will catch on fire and burn, (the "fire point") should be sufficiently high to insure absence of fire hazard in the practical use of an oil.

(5) The percentage of fatty and petroleum oils used is important. Certain fatty oils of the non-drying type, such as olive, castor, rape, sperm, lard,

etc., have excellent lubricating qualities but are generally too viscous for household use; they are also subject to chemical changes by which they become rancid. On the other hand, petroleum oils, which can easily be produced in any desired viscosity, and which do not become rancid, or gum, will not maintain a positive lubricating film over a surface as well as fatty oils.

Experiments showed that a mixture of fatty and petroleum oils would give a superior household lubricant, incorporating the advantages of both. While no authoritative information is available, it is believed that a 20% fatty oil content is satisfactory.

In the following study of 13 proprietary brands of household lubricating oils, the oils are rated according to the extent to which they possess the desirable qualities which have been listed.

Brand	Manufacturer or Distributor	Purchased at	Price per bottle cents	Net Contents fluid oz	Price per gallon dollars	Price Ratings	Quality Ratings	Statements and Claims on Labels	C. R.'s Comments
An oil made according to C. R. formula	—	—	18 to 22	10	2.72	1	A		Economical and highly satisfactory.
Alemite Household Oil	Alemite Corp. Chicago	Independent service station, New York City	30	3	12.80	3	A	A pure, stainless, non-gumming fluid lubricant for use on motors, guns, clocks, etc. Prevents rust. Stops squeaks.	Of all except C. R.'s formulae this most nearly met all requirements for a high grade household lubricant but on account of the high price consumers would rarely be justified in using it in preference to one of the oils rated B.
Superior Lubricating Oil	Salem Chemical Co., Salem, Mass.	F. W. Woolworth & Co., New York City	10	6	2.13	1	B	Warranted not to gum.	Large decrease in viscosity with a rise in temperature.
Seroco Household Oil	Sears, Roebuck & Co., Chicago	Sears, Roebuck & Co., New York City	15	4	4.80	2	B	Prevents rust and is non-corrosive.	Large decrease in viscosity with a rise in temperature.
Lubricote	Socony Vacuum Specialties, Inc., New York City	Sobol Bros. Gas Station, New York City	25	4	8.00	3	B	Will not gum nor corrode, penetrates and prevents rust by the formation of a spreading tenacious film of protection.	Large decrease in viscosity with a rise in temperature.
Ever-Ready Machine Oil	Ever-Ready Co., New York City	F. W. Woolworth & Co., New York City	10	4	3.20	1	C	The perfect oil. Lubricates, polishes, cleans. Removes and prevents rust. Does not gum.	Corrosive.
Nye's Oil	Wm. F. Nye, Inc., New Bedford, Mass.	F. W. Woolworth & Co., New York City	10	4	3.20	1	C	Cleans, lubricates and prevents rust. Warranted not to gum.	Corrosive.
Dutch Brand	Van Cleef Bros., Chicago	F. W. Grand & Co., New York City	10	6	2.13	1	C	Lubricates, cleans, polishes and prevents rust.	Unusually corrosive.
Radiant Machine Oil	Midway Chemical Co., Chicago	S. H. Kress & Co., New York City	10	4	3.20	1	C	Radiant highest quality. Lubricates, cleans and prevents rust. Makes things run smoothly.	Unusually corrosive.
Singer Sewing Machine Oil	Singer Sewing Machine Co., New York City	Singer Outlet store, New York City	15	3	6.40	2	C		The viscosity of this oil decreased greatly with a rise in temperature. As a sewing machine oil it would receive a B rating in quality.
Honor-Brite Household Machine Oil	Midway Chemical Co., Chicago	Independent store, New York City	10	3	4.27	2	C	A pure mineral oil. Guaranteed not to gum. For all uses.	Unusually corrosive.
Whiz Oil	R. M. Hollingshead Co., Camden, N. J.	Montgomery Ward & Co., New York	16	4	5.12	2	C	Whiz Oil lubricates, prevents rust, cleans and polishes.	Corrosive. The viscosity of this oil decreased greatly with a rise in temperature.
Three-In-One	Three-In-One Oil Co., New York City	Independent store, New York City	30	3	12.80	3	C	Lubricates, cleans and polishes. Prevents rust. The quality oil that saves you toil.	Advertised in but package does not exhibit seal of approval of Good Housekeeping. Had high acid content and was exceptionally corrosive.
Lubri-Tasgon	Wilbur and Williams Co., New York City	Independent store, New York City	20	3	8.53	3	C	The quickest penetrating lubricant.	The fire point of this oil was much too low for safety from fire hazard.

The tests of the household lubricating oils upon which C. R.'s judgments are based were carried out by Charles A. Marlies, of the College of the City of New York, and A. X. Schmidt, consulting chemist.



## How To Make a Good Household Lubricant

In addition to the above tests, experiments were made to develop a household lubricating oil that would warrant an A1 rating (first quality, at low cost), as none of the commercially exploited ones does, by preparing a mixture of petroleum oil, fatty oil, and kerosene oil.

In the experiments to select the type of petroleum oil to be used, automobile oils and medicinal mineral oils were found to be unsatisfactory, on account of their high viscosities. Motor "valve lubricants," which are sold to automobilists for preventing sticking of valves, however, were found to be suitable both in quality and price, and, being at present in vogue, easily procurable.

For the fatty oil content, olive oil, though relatively high in price, was chosen. The following mixture, when subjected to the same tests as the proprietary brands, was found to be economical and highly satisfactory, and so was rated A1. It can be made up very easily by anyone at a cost of about 30c to 35c per pt. (\$2.72 per gal.).

Kerosene ..... 1 fl. oz. or 1 part

Olive oil ..... 3 fl. oz. or 3 parts

Motor valve oil..... 6 fl. oz. or 6 parts

Any very light, neutral oil sold as motor valve lubricant, such as *Toplube* (Richfield Oil Co.) or *Koto* (Stanco, Inc.), costing 25c per pt. at automobile service stations and garages, may be used.

Additional experiments were made by substituting neatsfoot oil for the olive oil content. It was found that neatsfoot oil, as marketed at retail, varies widely in quality, the poorest having a marked excess of fatty acid content. Furthermore, it was expensive, ranging from \$6.40 to \$11.20 per gal. when bought in 4 and 8 oz. quantities. Assuming that the private consumer could buy small quantities of neatsfoot oil at an average price equivalent to \$7 per gal., it would cost \$3.32 to compound a gallon, or approximately 40c to compound a pint of household lubricating oil of the following proportions: kerosene, 1 part; neatsfoot oil, 3 parts; motor valve oil, 6 parts. At best, this compound would receive an A2 rating.

In making up a household lubricant, the ingredients should be correctly measured, thoroughly mixed, and poured into a clean and absolutely dry oil can or bottle. It is probably not advisable to make up more than 10 oz. at a time, unless the household's requirements are much greater than the average, or unless several families combine in a single purchase and divide the resulting product. If a fluid ounce measure is not easily available, any convenient small measure (e.g. small bottle or drinking glass) can be used providing the above proportions (1-3-6) are adhered to.

## Poverty From Installment Buying

**A**N OFFICIAL in the government service, reading the item, "Back To Thrift", in the October 1932, *General Bulletin*, writes, calling attention to a case involving high pressure salesmanship:

A woman who is the mother of seven children, has been the victim of high-powered salesman-

ship to the extent that she was persuaded to purchase an electric refrigerator on payments, and then an automobile on payments, which was handled through the \_\_\_\_\_ Corporation and involving what she was assured were the lowest finance charges offered by any automobile company. Her husband drives a laundry wagon and earns the magnificent stipend of \$28 a week. Her powers of resistance were nil against the smooth salesmanship in both cases, and she is now in desperate circumstances, having the payments on these two items to meet out of her husband's earnings. What pride and joy the salesmen must feel over their victory in such a case, and what a thrill must come to the officials of these companies at the successful triumph of creative salesmanship over the weak resistances of the common man.

Our admiration for a business leader of the type involved will be practically unbounded when he shall, by resigning if necessary from the high pressure band, use his influence to put a stop to this sort of enterprise. The law could easily intervene, were it not for its fantastic concept that the wife of a laundry wagon driver has bargaining power exactly comparable to that of the smooth-tongued gentry of an electric refrigerator sales department. It took the courts a long time to get over the idea that a shabby and indigent coal miner and a coal mine operator were on a plane of exact equality when a wage contract was being signed. There may yet come a time when the consumers' want of effective resistance to inequitable and indecent installment contracts will be considered by the courts as reason sufficient to invalidate such a contract.

There is no doubt that with the coming of a partial degree of business recovery there will be a sharp increase in the amount of installment buying urged upon consumers. Consumers will do well to remember the extra worry and financial burdens which a period of joblessness has put upon those who in the recent past have let themselves in for a long period of payments on a refrigerator, automobile or a radio set, bought for a small down payment and a few dollars a week.

## Use of CR Material In School and College Classes

**T**EACHERS in our educational institutions, primary, secondary, and collegiate, have never shown and probably never will show any great or burning desire to take part in conscious endeavors to alter the course of the commercialized social system under which they so insecurely operate. Neither have they, by and large, shown any profound interest in or ability at altering the horse-trading philosophy which dominates modern buying and selling. All of us have done our share of sentimental thinking about what should be the function of the schools in a changing social order (to use what is now a common pedagogical expression), but the schools on the whole remain unaffected and continually renew their allegiance to the "ideals" of the market place by offering additional courses in

advertising, salesmanship, and business administration, and by impregnating the minds of students with cruelly false and cheap ideas about the "money value of an education."

So thoroughly have we all been trained to accept a system dominated by production and selling activities that until comparatively recent times little or no thought has been given to the problems which confront us all as ultimate consumers of goods. But there appears to be a shift, however slight, in the economic current. At the moment, the word consumer—referring to that forgotten individual who buys soap, toilet paper, silk stockings, neckties, sewing machines, and canned peaches—is frequently referred to by the business-coordinating N.R.A. While this sudden attention to consumers is, no doubt, motivated primarily by the desire to get them to buy more goods and buy at the right moment under the Blue Eagle of the N.R.A., nevertheless, there is some justification for thinking that this attention to consumers may in time come to be a permanent one, if only because consumers are becoming conscious of their indispensability in a properly functioning industrial society.

There are also indications that the schools are beginning to sense the need for shifting the emphasis from training in methods of increasing production and sales to educating for wise consumption and intelligent living. CR has received an increasing number of inquiries regarding the possibility of developing consumer courses and using CR material in schools and colleges. Since the last announcement in the *General Bulletin* of January 1933, offering a selected list of *Handbooks* to use in economics, social science and general science classes,

about twenty-four colleges and two secondary schools have taken advantage of the offer with a total of over 1,000 students who have used this material in their class room work. As announced in a previous *General Bulletin*, the *Outline of the Course in Consumers' Problems* as given at the University of Tennessee and with modifications at the New School for Social Research, together with a bibliography of important books and articles for consumers' reading, is available at 10c. In order to make it possible for teachers to discuss problems in consumption from the standpoint of the relative value of goods and certain services as determined by unbiased and scientific tests and expert judgments, we again offer a special subscription at \$1 for students' class use when each student in the class subscribes. For classes opening in the fall of 1933 the material will consist of *Handbooks of Buying*: Vol. 7, Part 3 on Food (in part) and Office Supplies; Vol. 8, Part 1 on Cosmetics, Paint, Enamel and Varnish; Vol. 8, Part 2 on Textiles and Clothing, Laundering and Dry Cleaning; and the *Introduction to Consumers' Research*. For those who prefer it, *Handbook* Vol. 8, Part 3 on Automobiles of 1933, may be substituted for the *Handbook* Vol. 8, Part 1 on Cosmetics, etc. Other than this one substitution, no changes in the foregoing list of material to be furnished for student use may be made. This special student offer does not carry with it the privileges accorded regular subscribers (for a fee) such as the procuring of other confidential material or the answering under certain conditions set forth in the *Introduction*, of special inquiries. Instructors wishing to take advantage of this special offer should write for application blanks.

## Travel for Depression Incomes

**H**OW MUCH should a trip to Europe cost? How much can one spend on a trip abroad? These are two entirely different questions. Answering the first we would say that you can get much for very little, if you know how. In the latter case, the sky's the limit.

There are a few fortunate persons left, or so we are told, to whom money is no object. With these this discussion is not concerned. We shall look at the problem from the viewpoint of all who count their pennies and save their pay, and see what people like ourselves can do for about \$300.

This amount should cover all reasonable expenses for a simple leisurely vacation abroad, even with the dollar somewhat below par. We know plenty of people who have done it for less. The following points should be borne in mind:

(1) First of all, at this rate, one cannot always have a room with private bath. Private bathrooms are very much the exception, and a high-priced exception, in Europe, especially in the smaller hotels.

(2) You must keep your mileage down; long train rides cut into your budget.

(3) In order to get the lower hotel and *pension* rates, you should stay five days to a week in each of the principal cities visited. The longer stays also enable one to get more of the local atmosphere than

the here-today-gone-tomorrow mode of travel. This does not mean that one is anchored to the spot. By using London, Paris, Florence or Munich as a base, one can make a number of short, one-day trips out from that center.

(4) Confine your travels to two or three countries and do them more thoroughly, instead of trying to see every capital in Europe.

If we assume a budget of \$300 for a six weeks vacation, we should set aside about \$160 for the round trip third class steamer fare. Third class accommodations on the newer boats, the *Georgic*, the *Manhattan* and the *Champlain*, are very good. This leaves \$140 for 26 days in Europe, or about \$5 a day.

You can get room and breakfast almost anywhere for about \$10 a week. This leaves \$25 for other meals, and sightseeing. The advantage of taking one's meals out is that in this way one sees much of the restaurant and cafe life and one can dine at whatever time or place is most convenient.

Full *pension*, if wanted, should range from \$12 to \$18 a week, although prices vary considerably. In Spain, for example, it is very reasonable; in Switzerland more expensive. Accommodations are generally cheaper in the smaller centers than in the capital cities. For two dollars a day, one can live

like a prince in southern Spain or in the Pyrenees. Rates are also lower in the Rhineland and in the Scandinavian countries.

The foreign universities are attracting many American summer students. Oxford, Exeter and Cambridge offer lecture courses of three weeks in literature, history and English, with tuition about \$20 for the course and board about \$15 a week. Other courses at approximately the same rate are offered at Heidelberg, Munich, Florence and Paris. To attend these courses one need not study; one need only sit and listen.

If you like music and *Gemueticlichkeit*, settle down at Bayreuth or any of the south German resorts where splendid music is to be heard at the cost of a glass of beer. If you like the water, take a houseboat or wherry on the Norfolk Broads, in England. The cost for a party of four averages \$20 per week per person, including food. For mountains, choose a Swiss or Tyrolean village.

A delightful atmosphere and low cost of living, to those interested in the arts, are to be had in Florence, which has a large foreign colony. From this center one can make interesting side trips to the hill towns and to the Italian Lakes.

Seaside attractions against a background of fashion are found at Deauville.

The newest and one of the cheapest and most satisfactory forms of foreign travel is by motor car. Four should go together and two of the four should have a driver's license. In Paris a Drive-Yourself car can be hired with which to explore the highways and byways of France. The cost of such a vacation, averaging about a hundred miles per day for three weeks—four persons traveling together—should run about \$5 (100 francs) per day per person, including all expenses—meals, lodging, oil, gas and everything.

Why don't the travel bureaus tell about such cheap, pleasant ways of taking a vacation abroad? The answer is that travel bureaus, as they are at present organized, are not in a position to meet the needs of those who would travel within this price range—either there is no profit in it, or the profit is too small to interest them. The smaller hotels and *pensions* are accustomed to deal direct with their patrons and do not pay commissions, which accounts for the travel agencies' lack of interest in or knowledge of the accommodations of such smaller hostelrys.

### **What Can We Do About It?**

A group of CR enthusiasts who are interested in travel have formed a travel club of a kind that would appeal to CR subscribers, an agency to exchange ideas and information, and to record the combined knowledge and experience of its supporters, and make it available to other travelers-on-a-budget.

Many, reading this, may wish to add their own experience to the general fund of information. The Travelers Round Table Club wishes to get into touch with all who have traveled and know how to travel economically, and with those who would like to travel but must watch costs closely. The Travelers Round Table Club wishes to bring together

those with common interests—those who would like to travel but have not quite the courage to start out alone. It also wishes to get into touch with leaders who could take small groups abroad.

Those interested may secure further information from The Travelers Round Table Club, Inc., 29 West 57th Street, New York City.

[Editors' Note: CR has long been interested in the possibility of making available information about low cost travel, but for lack of time and funds has not included this important field of expenditure in its service. It is glad to print the above announcement because if the performance of this new group matches its plans, it will fulfill a very necessary function in providing a travel service of a critical and non-commercial type without financial relationships to steamship companies, hotels, etc., and in giving special emphasis to the needs of travelers of small financial resources. At the suggestion of CR The Travelers Round Table Club, Inc. has organized under the New York membership corporation law as a non-commercial agency, to be operated without pecuniary gain, benefit or profit to the corporation. It has further agreed to follow the example of CR by making a certified audit of its accounts available to anyone concerned (as CR does in the *Introduction to Consumers' Research*) so that its freedom from commercial pressure and interest shall be manifest.]

## **Buying a Washing Machine**

DEAR CONSUMERS' RESEARCH:

Other subscribers may be interested in our attempts to secure information about electric washing machines before making a purchase.

We had thought that it would be well to ask a few questions in regard to the results of the tests which we believed would have been made of the comparative performance of different makes of washing machines. We sent our questions to ten washing machine companies or agencies with a letter of explanation and a request for a prompt reply. The questionnaire read as follows:

Questions to Aid in Determining Make of Washing Machine Best Suited for Domestic Use by a Small Family.

*In answering these questions, please give facts as shown by scientific tests or research. Tell who made the test and where the complete results are available. We are not interested in unsupported claims of superiority.*

*We wish that no salesman or demonstrator call unless we request this later.*

*If you have several models of machines, please answer the questions separately for each type which you wish us to consider.*

*Washing Machine*

1. Name of machine.
2. Type.
3. Price: Cash on Delivery . . . Cash 30 Days . . . Installments
4. How long is normal life of machine? What tests prove this?
5. What are the particular advantages of your make of machine?

6. What scientific facts or tests prove these advantages?
7. What comparative tests have been made of various makes of machines to show:
  - The cost to operate in terms of electricity, hot water, soap?
  - How fast a given amount of work is completed?
  - The wear on clothes?
  - Who conducted the tests? What were the results?
  - Please enclose a complete copy of the results.
8. What is the average secondhand price of your machine?
9. What kind of motor is used? Universal, D.C., or A.C.?
  - What make?
  - What voltage?
10. Is there any automatic stop or release for overloads?
11. What parts of the machine are in accordance with government standardized specifications? (e.g., nuts, screws, motor.)
12. Do you sell repossessed machines?
13. What guarantees do you give of new and of repossessed machines?
14. What metals are used in the main parts of the machine?
  - Why? Have you any tests to prove the relative efficiency of different metals?
15. Has your machine a wringer or not? What advantages can you adduce for this?
16. What repairs will probably be necessary and when?
17. What is the average repair bill for 1,000 hours of operation or for such other period as you may have figures?
18. Is the top of your machine usable as a table when the machine is not in use?
19. What do you regard as the two best makes of washing machine now on the market?

Answered by  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Out of ten replies only one was fairly satisfactory in that it alone gave detailed answers to most of our questions; it appeared to base the answers upon tests when possible. One other answer indicated that the company really had some glimmering of the idea that we wanted facts and not "sales talk." We followed up this reply by calling upon the firm that had answered the letter to ask for more information. They said we could count on getting Service from them anywhere. Why, if we went to Europe we would use *telephones* made by their company!

Three leading mail order houses sent long letters and two sent stamped reply envelopes. Sears, Roebuck and Co., "The World's Largest Store," wrote rather a masterpiece of sales literature. It started by expressing the confidence of the writer in his product, then it complimented us on "the intelligent manner" in which we requested certain informa-

tion. The third paragraph said that they were giving all the answers they could and referred to their catalogue for further details. That led easily to the last paragraph which read:

We wish to call your attention particularly to our new style *Water Witch*. This is our latest model and in it we have incorporated all the knowledge which our years of experience in washing machine construction has taught us. At this time, we would like to go into detail regarding the special merits, but what we think better for us to do is send you a washer so that you can give it a personal inspection in your own home.

During this time you are asked to test it thoroughly, comparing it with washers selling elsewhere. You can then see for yourself that our washer although it is selling at a far reasonable [sic] price than other makes compares with them in every detail, and we know that you will agree by purchasing from us you have realized a substantial saving.

Trusting that you will decide in our favor, we are looking forward with pleasure to receiving your order and assure you it will be given prompt attention.

"The oldest mail order house is today the most progressive," is one of the slogans of Montgomery Ward & Co. That may be why their reply referred to eighteen different models and types of electric washing machines listed in their catalogue. They also mentioned their research engineers and their guarantee and then stated:

In view of the fact that we quote so many different models as enumerated above, I think that possibly it would be much simpler for both of us if you will give me the name or names of the machines you are already considering and similar statistics on them as you asked me to give. I can then make comparisons between them and any similar models which we might have in our catalogue. If you will please be so kind as to give me this information, you may be assured that your reply will receive prompt attention. I feel sure that I can convince you that you can get as good a machine from us as you can buy elsewhere at a price as low as one-half of what you might pay the local distributor.

We sent to them the names of the machines but never heard further from "the most progressive" house.

The Department of Correspondence of Charles William Stores, Inc., a smaller mail order house, wrote in part:

We are also returning the questionier [sic] you forwarded us in your recent letter with the questions unanswered as some of the questions therein are unanswerable namely question 7 referring to how fast a given amount of work is completed and the wear on the clothes as this entire matter depends upon the condition of the clothes as clothes or garments that have been worn by a man in some trade where his garments get oily and greasy would require considerable more washing than garments worn by a person doing Office Work [sic].



We had asked for *comparative* performance—a fact that was overlooked, intentionally or otherwise, by the person doing the “Office Work” of answering our letter. He added the somewhat confused paragraph:

We make no claims in our catalog for our machines, however, than those made in the catalog we are now forwarding you but we would be willing for you to purchase one of the machines shown therein and use same along side of the machine you are now trying out and proving for yourself the advantages of same subject to the condition that if the machine does not prove satisfactory that you can return same and receive a refund of your money.

A letter from Hartford's leading department store said:

In reply to your valued inquiry of recent date, in regards to the Washing Machine, beg to advise that would be pleased to fill out the form which you included with this letter, with the different questions you have. We are unable to answer all of these, lacking the data on scientific and laboratory tests.

We would much rather send one of our washing machines we carry in stock, to your home and give you the opportunity of making your own conclusions. We believe this is the best way to make comparisons, and are confident that when you see our machine alongside of any other which you may have in mind, that you will select ours in preference, *especially when our man points out the superior features of this machine.* [Italics ours—CR]. We carry the *Easy Electric Washing Machine*, in both the drier and wringer types. We would be pleased to sell you one of these with the G. Fox & Co. guarantee and service. This we believe should mean more to you than any laboratory test or claim.

Trusting this will be satisfactory to you, and hoping you will consent to allow us to send an *Easy* on trial, we remain.

It would be interesting to quote from the twenty-four page Sales Manual sent us by the *Whirldry* Corporation. Their machine is “not just another washer—it is more than that.” But the book is copyrighted and we have no permission to quote. A good deal of technical information is given in a section that is used “when a man is concerned in the sale.” The book gives a nice set of questions to be asked in a house-to-house investigation by an agent who is “seeking information, not endeavoring to sell you something.” Maybe he is not, but beware his next call.

The representatives of the *Maytag* Washers apparently had not before been approached by anyone who wanted to know technical details about the product they were selling. They acknowledged our letter promptly and said they had referred it to the factory. One week later they replied as follows, addressing the letter to a name entirely different from my own which they had used correctly a week earlier:

In further reference to your recent inquiry beg to advise that our way of selling the *Maytag* washer is to give a thorough demonstration in

the home and we do not see any particular reason for answering the long list of technical questions, because we are not sure as to just what use the information will be put. If anyone is interested in the purchase of a machine we will be glad to take the matter up with them personally.

From another company we got the brief, but so far as we were concerned, conclusive statement that it was against the policy of the company to give out the results of any tests.

The best answer was from Landers, Frary & Clark, makers of the *Roto-Verso* Washer, who gave three pages of material that was all to the point, although the only tests to which reference was made were those conducted by the company itself: they made no effort to use unsupported sales arguments. Instead we were told such things as that the average life of the machine had been found by breakdown tests to be 8,800 hours; some of its exclusive features were enumerated without comment; the cost per hour was given on the basis of Hartford's electricity rate; and, finally, only one unasked for piece of information:

The *Roto-Verso* Washer may be purchased from the Hartford Electric Light Company.

We purchased it.

That was about six years ago. The machine (though it has not been in constant use) has been entirely satisfactory. We learned a few years later from the daughter of a banker that one of the manufacturers to whom we sent the questionnaire had written to him to find out whether we were planning to start manufacturing washing machines. An innocent consumer, seeking only to make an intelligent purchase, appeared to be regarded as a spying competitor.

Very truly yours,

HENRY E. NILES,  
M. C. H. NILES.

[Editors' Note: The technique of consumer's inquiry outlined above is an excellent one which might be applied to many sorts of mechanical and electrical appliances which the consumer may contemplate purchasing, in the absence of comparative test data such as are afforded by CR's confidential service.]

### Another Way to Save Electricity— Don't Buy Electrical Appliances and Gadgets

THE CONSUMER who wishes to economize by reducing his bill for electricity should not fall for the high pressure methods now being used to increase the consumption of electricity through the forcing upon the consumer of many new electrical appliances of dubious utility value. On the whole, small electric appliances bought at drug stores and 10-cent stores are very poor in quality and often, perhaps usually, actually dangerous to use; tests made for CR show that a large proportion of the high-priced appliances are also of low quality and dubious safety and not of proper efficiency. Specific tests on a considerable number of such appliances have been reported in CR confidential bulletins and *Handbooks*.

1. Don't use electric percolators for coffee making. Percolators, though a favorite wedding or birthday present in all classes of society, tend to make the beverage bitter by extracting from the grounds certain undesirable constituents which the drip type coffee pots do not (see report in July 1933 issue of the *General Bulletin*).

2. Toast bread when possible with gas or on a coal stove rather than with electricity. It is much less expensive to toast bread with gas than with high-priced electricity; by the exercise of reasonable care, equally good results can be obtained; often, the gas-toasted bread will be better since the temperature can be adjusted to make the toast of the tint and crispness preferred, which is commonly not possible with the electric toasters.

3. Extract juice from oranges and lemons by a hand power machine, the type which squeezes the fruit and does not grind out the interior. The electric motor powered orange juicers and large electric food mixers are not economical for small families, as they not only add to the monthly electric bill but the amount of work involved in setting up and cleaning them after use (and sometimes before, if they are not used often) far outweighs any additional convenience which they afford. Even in soda fountain use, hand operated juicers are to-day being found more useful and capable of giving a more desirable type of juice than that which comes from "grinding" out the interior of the fruit, with the

high-priced, motor driven gadgets that were the latest development of mechanical genius (or was it advertising men) a year or two ago.

4. Reduce electric bills by shutting off your radio set when not giving it your attention. Many people have the habit of allowing the radio to spout advertising copy and political speeches all day long. From many points of view the continued operation of the radio set is undesirable. Worst of all, perhaps, such a practice gives an opportunity for advertisers insidiously to establish subconscious buying habits or trends, which may be greatly and permanently to the listener's disadvantage, either as determining choice of a particular brand or causing a change, always on irrational grounds, from an accustomed and useful or economical household or culinary practice. At least, so far as possible, keep the advertiser out of your subconscious life.

5. Save current also by turning off your electric refrigerator during weekend absences, unless your refrigerator is the type which leaks sulphur dioxide, a choking corrosive gas, when the unit is not in operation. Some have found it a great saving to disconnect or turn off the refrigerator at night, particularly during cool and cold weather. A thermometer in the food chamber will indicate how long the unit may be left off; the food temperature may safely be allowed to rise to 50° or a little above that temperature, for short periods.

## Enemies of the Consumer

A VIGOROUS ATTACK is being launched by the patent medicine manufacturers on the proposed revision of the Federal Food and Drugs Act. Indeed their recent three-day convention was devoted almost entirely to discussion of ways and means to defeat this proposed consumer-protecting legislation. A trade paper in which an account of the proceedings appears, states:

Seldom if ever has any convention devoted itself so wholly to one topic, or has greater harmony and unanimity of opinion prevailed in a group session. If the entire program of concerted activity in opposition to the measure is carried through as planned, it cannot fail to have great weight and prove an important factor in the eventual deliberations when the bill comes up for enactment or defeat a few months hence.

The methods to be employed in the warfare of opposition are many in number, and coordinated into a complete whole give promise of a most effective means of combating legislation which if enacted could, and probably would, spell the doom of the industry.

We have in a number of places suggested that the revision of the food and drug laws would meet with powerful opposition from well financed lobbies. It is not often, however, that a body acting against the consumer's interest has expressed itself quite so frankly.

The trade paper already referred to reports further that seventeen plans have been drawn up to

guide the fight for the defeat of the measure. Some of the most significant are:

Secure cooperation of newspapers in spreading favorable publicity, *particularly papers now carrying advertising for members of the Association. . . .*

Secure the pledge of manufacturers, wholesalers, advertising agencies and all other interested affiliates to address letters to Senators to secure their promise to vote against the measure.

Line up with other organizations, such as Drug Institute, Proprietary Association, National Association of Retail Druggists, and others, *to make a mass attack on bill.*

Cooperation of every member in doing missionary work in home districts to arouse public *to the dangers* [to patent medicine manufacturers' advertising and profits] *of the legislation proposed. . . .*

Carrying to the public by every means available, radio, newspaper, mail and personal contact, the alarming fact that if the bill is adopted, the public will be deprived of the right of self-diagnosis and self-medication, and would be compelled to secure a physician's prescription for many simple needs. [Italics ours—CR]

With respect to securing the cooperation of newspapers, the pressure of advertising agencies which handle patent medicine accounts and advertising for other products as well can be brought to bear in irresistible fashion, even upon newspapers which

do not carry advertising for members of the patent medicine manufacturers' association.

As to the right of self-diagnosis and self-medication, the proposed bill, which at best is a very mild measure, offers no provision which would deprive any consumer of the right of self-diagnosis and self-medication, nor would it require him to secure a physician's prescription for simple (or for any other) medical needs. It would indeed prohibit the sale of remedies represented as being effective for the cure of cancer, tuberculosis, appendicitis, diabetes, eczema, and other dangerous diseases difficult to treat even under the best conditions. Claims of remedial value would have to make sense—that is, they would have to be in conformity with intelligent medical opinion and not merely the judgment of some fake scientist or of a totally uneducated concocter of a drug mixture. The new law would prohibit outrageously false advertising with respect to proprietary medicines.

The plans of the patent medicine trade include conference with the Washington authorities and the enlisting of help from every manufacturer and wholesaler, even of bottles, boxes, cartons and tubes, to the end that irresistible pressure may be brought on federal legislators to defeat the measure. There is no doubt of course that such a powerful group acting in concert and backed by large funds and newspaper and magazine publicity will have a strong influence in shaping the final form that the proposed measure will take. Church groups, women's clubs, college clubs, college and high school faculties, and other socially-minded groups should exert every pressure possible on their Congressmen and Senators to counteract this influence. In order to help those who are interested in presenting a formal petition, Consumers' Research has drawn up a draft of resolutions all or part of which may be used as a basis for discussion and action by clubs, societies and similar groups. These resolutions are available free of charge to all requesting them.

Be on the lookout for editorials or what may appear to be news items in your local papers attacking the bill or charging those who support it with the intention to invade the rights of private individuals to self-medication or to infringe a manufacturer's prerogative To Serve The American People [through the sale of "necessary home remedies"]. *Above all, let the editor of your paper know that you are watching this legislation* and that you expect that his paper will not deal with it from the standpoint of the selfish interests of the manufacturers of worthless or dangerous nostrums.

If a strong popular protest is made against lobbyists and other interests who are now working hard against the bill, there is some chance that something may go through Congress which will afford the consumer a slightly better protection than he has at present from poisonous cosmetics, adulterated foods, fruits and vegetables poisoned by spray residues, and misbranded and adulterated drug products. It will take many letters from consumers to provide the necessary counter-attack offsetting the medicine manufacturers' opposition to the Food and Drugs Act. Consumers lacking funds

and "contact men" and lacking above all the ability to control the influence of newspaper publishers and the votes of a large number of factory workers, salesmen, drug store owners and clerks, will at best be at a great disadvantage. They must by the tone and substance of their letters convince the legislators that they will hold their representatives responsible if they take their orders and determine this vital legislation from the standpoint of the conscienceless patent medicine trade—a trade which in its present aspects is removed by differences mainly of "tone" and advertising tactics from the circus faker and the vendor of snake oil and magic salves and potions.

### Barbers Complicate the Problem

Hair clippings collected from beauty parlors and barber shops and subjected to chemical analysis show that many persons are carrying around mild cases of arsenic poisoning. The widespread use of poison sprays to protect fruit and other crops, such as cotton, is said to be the source of the poison.

WHAT the writer of this note says in a druggist's house organ, *Tile and Till*, (July 1932) is true. It is through the hair that our bodies excrete much of the arsenic which we take in by eating of fruit and vegetables and in other ways, and which would otherwise accumulate in the body. The danger is one that assails us from many directions—thanks to a theory of state and federal functioning which assumes that a hazard involving only consumers is not a question that governmental officials concern themselves about.

Consumers' Research *General Bulletin* ended its first year as a separate service in July, 1933, with a subscription list of well over ten thousand. We hope that during the coming year it may increase to twenty thousand at least, and so enable us to reach as many as possible of those groups that are not eligible to subscribe to the confidential service, and those who are especially interested in an economic fact-finding and interpreting service keyed to the interests and point of view of consumers.

May we remind our readers that the *General Bulletin* is issued quarterly during the subscription period, October through July, (four numbers during the year) and for the present, subscriptions can be accepted for this period only. The annual subscription costs \$1. Send in your name and address with check or money order; no special blank is required.

We suggest that for many, especially teachers in high school, college, or university, and to students of economics, and of business, and for the more progressive business man a subscription to CR's *General Bulletin* will be a timely and often much appreciated Christmas present.

## Signs and Portents

LABOR costs are going up and prices must go up correspondingly,—is the alibi of business men to-day in explaining rise in prices even when the wage payments have not increased. How different was the argument in 1931 when pressure was being brought to force prices down:

The cost of producing a commodity should have nothing to do with its selling price. The latter is controlled by outside factors, including what competitors are doing, the volume the market will consume at a given price level, the savings made by the product, its desirability, etc. (Speech made before American Management Association, Cleveland, Ohio, November 12, 1931, reported in *Advertising Age*, November 14, 1931.)

THE WRITER of the following letter to *The New York Times* did not say, indeed may not realize that this method by which the consumer can cast his vote against a product is thoroughly in line with democratic principles, but is one which the business interests have always "despised" and actively outlawed and suppressed, since it is the one potent consumer's weapon which they would be powerless to withstand. The writer says:

In *The Times* of July 23 Arthur Krock writes: "Men and women who have spent their lives defending personal liberty . . . are for the boycott. Only here and there has a voice been raised against its obvious dangers, its plain defiance of many things implied by the Constitution. The general attitude seems to be that perilous circumstances call for desperate remedies. Later will come the task of restoring the American system of free individual action."

Mr. Krock does not tell us that the task which he says will come later is going to be an easy one. Under the guise of "an appeal to patriotism" the boycott system, always despised by the good [meaning businesslike] citizens of our country, will be adopted. (*New York Times*, August 3, 1933.)

THIS ITEM appeared in a trade journal but we haven't seen any report of it in women's magazines which carry cold cream advertising:

The substitution of cold cream for soap and water is claimed by two Los Angeles physicians to be responsible for many cases of *acne rosacea* . . . Drs. Samuel Ayres and Nelson Paul Anderson hold an organism, called *Demodex folliculorum*, responsible for this skin disease . . . The daily use of soap and water was an important factor in their successful treatment of acne. . . . (*Drug Trade News*, July 10, 1933.)

THERE ARE a great many kindly and well-meaning people who would like to see something done to remedy the results of our economic system which is working great hardship and suffering in the lives of several millions in this country. Most of them, however, even those who profess to be radical in thought, are unwilling to face the possibility of a radical change in the system whereby their own status might become less comfortable. The following quotation sums up the situation admirably:

We have a century and more of development to undo. The institutions of *Laissez Faire* have become so much a

part of the fabric of modern life that the untangling and removing of their tissues will be almost like dispensing with civilization itself. We shall all of us be made unhappy in one way or another; for things we love as well as things that are only privileges will have to go. The protective vine makes the ruined wall seem beautiful; we dislike abandoning it for something different. But we shall have to see, no doubt, a wholesale sacrifice of such things, like it as little as we may. (*In Economic Justice*, January 1933.)

THE CONSUMER'S welfare is, as usual, subordinate to business expediency. The arsenic spray besides being poisonous, destroys vitamin values in the fruit—probably reasons why its use was prohibited—but the growers, it may be, didn't stress that fact in their arguments to the judge.

### Rules Arsenic Spray Is Permissible

Lakeland, Fla.—Judge H. C. Petteway has declared invalid a Florida law prohibiting the use of arsenic spray to hasten ripening of grapefruit. The judge granted an injunction asked by growers. (*Food Field Reporter*, August 28, 1933.)

CLAIMED *Good Housekeeping* in a summer issue. "Even the text of advertisements is sharply scrutinized to see that there are no claims or statements made in advertisements which are not supported by fact." If the readers of this magazine and of others which profess to censor advertising claims read advertising journals containing the pronouncements of the ad-men themselves, they would be less inclined to believe such statements. For example:

Advertising is of the market place and can never be truthful to the degree now urged by many reformers. It must by its very job be partisan, which is another way of saying it exaggerates virtues and qualities to the detriment of competition. [Italics ours—CR]. (Stewart L. Mims, a vice-president of J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, *Advertising and Selling*, May 25, 1933.)

CR HAS consistently opposed, in earlier bulletins, plans to legalize "resale price maintenance," as typified by the Capper-Kelly bill, which is devised to permit a manufacturer to fix the price at which the retailer must sell any given manufactured article. To most persons, even those who are only moderately disinterested, it will be obvious that the price to the consumer that the manufacturer will fix will not be as low as the price which is now set by the operation of competition among dealers. A druggist subscriber has inadvertently confirmed this point in a letter to CR and has rationalized the disappearance of competition on the ground of the trouble that will be saved consumers when they no longer have to shop for anything.

I will have something to say regarding your stand on the Capper-Kelly bill as expressed in 2.30. You don't seem to understand that the legislation that we want passed compels no one to uphold the price of their product, it merely gives the manufacturer of a trade-marked article the privilege of naming the retail price. That saves the consumer the trouble of trying to find the cheapest place to buy the article that has been sold to him or her by advertising. [Italics ours—CR]



